

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **09/942,582**  
Amendment dated November 1, 2004  
Reply to OA of **May 3, 2004**

**REMARKS:**

Claims 1-7 are currently pending, of which claims 1 and 3-5 have been amended. No new claims have been added. Applicant respectfully believes that no new matter has been introduced.

**Information Disclosure Statement:**

In the Office Action mailed May 3, 2004, the Examiner notifies the Applicant that item (AF) in the Information Disclosure Statement filed on October 26, 2001 does not include a concise explanation of relevance. Applicant thanks the Examiner for this notification. Applicant respectfully submits herewith an English-language Abstract corresponding to item (AF) in the Information Disclosure Statement dated October 26, 2001.

The enclosed English language Abstract, corresponding to Japanese Publication Number 09-330458 and item (AF), is respectfully believed to satisfy the requirements for an Information Disclosure Statement as described in 37 CFR 1.98, and as described in MPEP 609 (III.A.3) which states that "Submission of an English language abstract of a reference may fulfill the requirement for a concise explanation."

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **09/942,582**  
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Thus, in view of the foregoing remarks and enclosed English-language Abstract, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider item (AF) listed in the IDS filed on October 26, 2001, and sign and initial where needed on Form PTO-1449.

Before turning to the cited art, a brief review of the present invention is in order. The present invention includes a locker system with a locker, an electronic lock, a control unit, and a reader, and additional features. The control unit is connected to a locker managing center through a communication line. In order to deposit luggage, a depositor (user) must have an identifier that has been preliminarily determined by a contract between a managing company of the locker and the depositor. A depositor who deposits a piece of luggage can select the type of recipient of the luggage: either a specific individual or a specific group.

Claims 1-7:

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over USP 5,223,829 (**Watabe**) in view of USP 6,367,696 (**Inamitsu**).

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

**Watabe** and **Inamitsu**, alone or in combination, do not describe, teach, or suggest the following features of claim 1, as amended: “a reading means for electrically reading a depositor

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **09/942,582**  
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identifier that has been preliminarily determined by a contract between a managing company of the locker and a user of the locker; ... and a central control unit which, when said reading means reads said depositor identifier preliminarily determined by the contract between the managing company of the locker and the user of the locker, and when, the depositor identifier read by said reading means is identified as said depositor identifier preliminarily determined by the contract, releases the electric lock to allow the door of the locker to open..., wherein the user is only able to deposit luggage into the locker after said central control unit performs the releasing of the electric lock”, in combination with the other claimed features.

**Watabe and Inamitsu**, alone or in combination, do not describe, teach, or suggest the following features of claim 3, as amended: “a reading means for electrically reading a depositor identifier and a receiver identifier that have been preliminarily determined by a contract between a managing company of the locker and a user of the locker; ... and a central control unit which, based upon a read depositor identifier and receiver identifier read by the reading means, and when the read receiver identifier or depositor identifier have been identified as said depositor identifier or said receiver identifier preliminarily determined by the contract between managing company and the user, opens the electronic lock to allow the door of the locker to open..., wherein the user is only able to deposit luggage into the locker after said central control unit performs the opening of the electronic lock”, in combination with the other claimed features.

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/942,582  
Amendment dated November 1, 2004  
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Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and remarks, claims 1-7, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, KRATZ, QUINTOS,  
HANSON & BROOKS, LLP

*Darren R. Crew*

Darren R. Crew  
Attorney for Applicant  
Reg. No. 37,806

DRC/llf  
Atty. Docket No. 011127  
Suite 1000  
1725 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 659-2930



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Enclosure: English language Abstract of Japanese Pub. No. 09-330458

## PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

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(71)Applicant : N T T DATA TSUSHIN KK  
FURUTAIMU SYST:KK

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(72)Inventor : HARA KOICHIRO  
IIDA TOSHIHIDE  
ICHIHASHI TAKASHI  
TAKAHASHI SHOGO  
SUZUKI MAMORU  
SHINKAI ICHIRO

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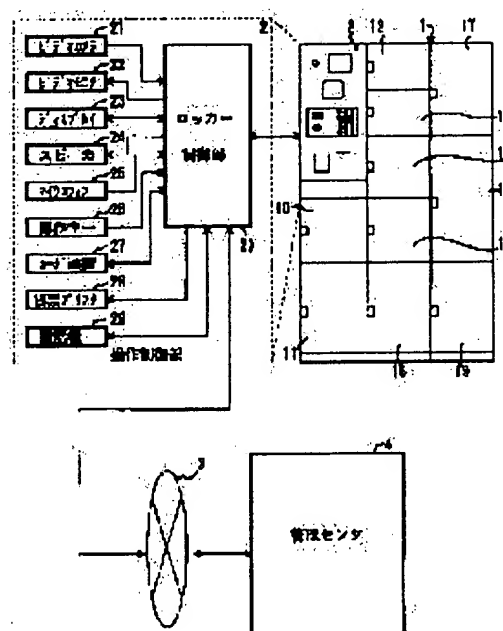
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## (54) LOCKER SYSTEM

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a locker system certainly identifying an operator and accurately leaving the record of the transfer of an article.

SOLUTION: A locker 1 is provided with article housing parts 10 to 19. An operation key 26 interactively inputs information by operator's operation by referring to a display. A card device 27 reads and writes recording information in an IC card, which records characteristic information for identifying the operator. A locker control part 20 operates corresponding to operation keys and collates characteristic information obtained from a card device 27 and stored in the IC card and characteristic information inputted from operation key to identify the operator. When the operator is an authorized person, the control part 20 controls the opening and closing of the housing parts 10 to 19 and records a temporary receipt, a receipt, etc. in the optical recording part of the IC and through the card device 2.



## LEGAL STATUS

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14.10.1999

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